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RUEHGB/AMEMBASSY BAGHDAD 0298
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RUEHOS/AMCONSUL LAGOS 1335
RHMFISS/HQ USAFRICOM STUTTGART GE
RHEBAAA/DEPT OF ENERGY WASHDC
RHEHNSC/NSC WASHINGTON DC
RUEAIIA/CIA WASHINGTON DC
RUEKDIA/DIA WASHDC
RHMFISS/HQ USEUCOM VAIHINGEN GE
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SENSITIVE
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SUBJECT: NIGERIA: AMBASSADOR YATES' MEETING WITH MINISTER
OF STATE FOR DEFENSE

¶1. (SBU) SUMMARY: On April 21, visiting Africa Command Deputy Commander Ambassador Mary Carlin Yates met with Minister of State for Defense Ademola Seriki to discuss regional security cooperation and the growing military-to-military partnership between the U.S. and Nigeria. Reviewing the recent successful visit of the USS Nashville as part of Africa Partnership Station (APS) from March 17-27, they also discussed the (subsequently canceled) upcoming visit of Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff (CJCS) Admiral Mike Mullen. A brief encounter with the press followed, in which Ambassador Yates affirmed the purpose of Africa Command and the fact that it will remain headquartered in Stuttgart, Germany, for the foreseeable future. END SUMMARY.

¶2. (SBU) On April 21, Ambassadors Yates and Sanders met with Minister of State for Defense Ademola Seriki to discuss security cooperation and the next steps in the growing military-to-military relationship between the United States and Nigeria. Marine Attache was notetaker. First, the then-upcoming but subsequently canceled visit of CJCS was discussed. Next, and of particular interest to Seriki, was the subject of how to increase maritime cooperation, especially on the heels of the successful March 17-27 Lagos visit of the USS Nashville as part of APS. Ambassador Sanders told Seriki about the international make-up of the Nashville's APS staff, including six Nigerian shipriders and three Nigerian officers, and she also mentioned that the Lagos port call was made at the request of the GON in order to provide training. Ambassador Yates then went on to tell Seriki that Africa Command was working closely with Gulf of Guinea nations to develop maritime domain awareness programs.

¶3. (SBU) Minister Seriki replied that the U.S. military and its security standards were unrivaled worldwide, and were the envy of other nations. He also said that as a nation can only be a regional and world leader upon establishing its own national security, Nigeria was open to security sector reform and welcomed U.S. assistance. He went on to say that he has a framework in mind for how to proceed in partnership with donor nations within the Gulf of Guinea Energy Security Strategy context. Upon leaving his office, Ambassadors Yates and Sanders were met by the press, and Ambassador Yates used the opportunity to remind journalists of the benign intentions of the USG in creating Africa Command, and the

fact that Command headquarters would remain in Stuttgart for the foreseeable future.

¶4. (U) This cable coordinated with Consulate Lagos.
SANDERS